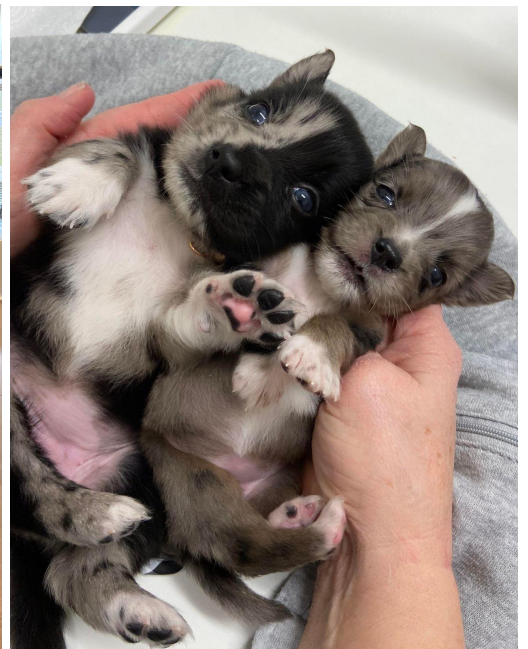




# *Puppy Foster Guide*



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# Puppy Set Up

## Before Bringing Fosters into Your Home

A foster animal could potentially carry illness into your home that could affect your resident animals' (or humans') health:

- To protect your pets, foster animals should be separated from household pets for at least two weeks. This means that you should also prohibit the sharing of food and water bowls and toys. Your pets need to be up to date on their vaccines as well to keep both fosters and personal pets safe. Talk with your vet and let them know you will be fostering, they may have more recommendations for you! You may also want to change clothes before handling your own animals, especially if you have been handling the pups' waste.
- To protect people, young children should not handle the foster puppies unsupervised. Everyone should always wash their hands with soap and water after handling puppies and their fecal waste.

Fleas can spread disease to animals and people alike. Depending on age, the puppies will be flea treated. They can have flea medication at 6 weeks. We can give a capstar pill at 4 weeks if they are covered. This is just to kill the live fleas on them for 24 hours, not a preventative. You can also give them a bath with Dawn dish soap if you notice fleas. Create a small soap ring around the pups' necks so the fleas can't crawl onto their faces while you wash them. Use a flea comb to get them off of the puppies.

You should routinely disinfect the foster puppy's quarters and disinfect the entire premises before new puppies are introduced. The best way to disinfect the area is to remove all organic material and fecal debris and then soak with a mild bleach solution (1-part bleach to 32 parts water) for at least 30 minutes in a well-ventilated room. All surfaces, bowls, toys etc. need to be disinfected. You probably want to keep puppies in a room without carpeting. We recommend hardwood floors, tile, etc; however, if that is not an option you can lay down a waterproof tarp.

*It is possible even with these precautions that resident dogs could be exposed to mild infections such as URI. Ask the foster coordinator for more information if this is a concern.*



## Time to Set Up for Pups!

### Puppies 0-4 weeks

Puppies 4 weeks and under must be kept in a carrier or a large Rubbermaid tub without a lid. Puppies at this age cannot regulate their body temperatures: you should have a heat source such as a heating pad (without the auto off function) or a Snuggle Safe disc. If using a disc, it must be reheated after 8 hours or it will pull the heat from the puppy. Some fosters place the disc on top of a heating pad. Place a blanket or towel between the puppies and the heating source. The heat source should not cover the entire space so that the puppy can move towards and away from the heat as necessary. Without external heat, your puppy will fail to thrive.

### Puppies 5-7 weeks



Puppies 5-7 weeks of age should be kept in their own space but can be moved from their previous carrier or tub to a larger area, such as a dog kennel or playpen. They're still too young to have free roam of a room all day and need to be monitored regularly. You'll also want to have pee pads, newspaper, or sheets down now that puppies are moving onto gruel and wet food and will be messier. It's best to still provide a heat source for them as well during this stage. Remember, generally puppies cannot go outside at this age. It's

not safe for any puppy to be exposed to grassy areas until they have had their second DHPP shot.

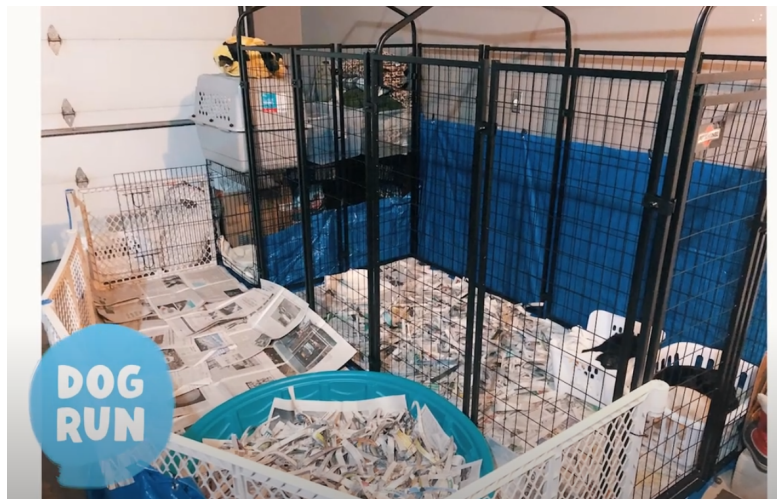
Furthermore, places with unfamiliar dogs (i.e. dog-friendly patios, dog-friendly stores, etc) are not safe until the puppy has had all four DHPP vaccines.

Since they will start to get more inquisitive at this stage, puppy proofing is key.

- If pups are kept in a bathroom, make sure all medications and cleaners are kept locked up. Keep the toilet lid closed and the bath tub empty!
- If pups are kept in a living area, make sure all houseplants and electrical cords are kept out of their reach. Secure the cords for any blinds and keep windows shut.

### Common Household Hazards

- Reclining/Rocking chairs- puppies can easily crawl up/inside/under and become injured.
- Toilets- keep lids CLOSED at all times
- Bathtubs- keep water drained at all times
- Doors- open doors slowly and cautiously
- House plants- keep out of reach, many are toxic to dogs
- Cords- we recommend removing or covering any accessible cords
- Outlets- keep covered
- Other animals- they can injure puppies or transmit diseases to them



- Appliances- these often have crawl spaces and wires
- Small objects- these can be choked on, be sure the space is tidy
- Strings/Rubber bands/Hair ties- choking hazard
- Chemical/Cleaning products- make sure all chemicals are removed from the space



### **Nursing Mom**

Moms with newborns need a nesting box, filled with soft, clean blankets. Plastic kiddie pools work very well for this - HES can provide one for you if necessary. Keep mom and her whelping box in a secluded area, such as a room with a door that closes to keep her from roaming the house and to keep other animals away from her and the puppies. Try not to mess with this area more than absolutely necessary so mom doesn't feel the need to relocate her babies. It is okay if she relocates them to a more secluded space, such as a closet, as long as the new space is safe.

Do visual inspections of the bedding in the nesting box daily to make sure they are clean. Try to use white bedding so you can tell if there is urine or feces on it. Only change the bedding when necessary. As the

puppies grow older, lots of layers of bedding can help pad the pool, making clean up easier by just removing the top layer or two every so often

The ambient temperature for puppies and nursing moms should stay above 68 degrees to prevent the puppies from becoming chilled. Pet-safe heaters are a great way to keep the temperature in their room appropriate if you prefer to keep your house on the cooler side!

Some vomiting and diarrhea is normal after giving birth. Limit mom's food and water intake for the first 24 hours to help with this. After that, puppies and nursing moms should be free fed puppy kibble at all times. Nursing is very demanding on Mom's body, so high calorie puppy kibble is perfect to help her stay full and healthy. Nursing puppies will start to learn from mom how to eat wet food and kibble at around 3.5 - 4.5 weeks. Once they begin eating the kibble, they should have constant access as mom will soon begin to push them away when they try to nurse. You can offer canned food to help supplement mom's diet as well. Puppies will also benefit from this as they are weaning. Allow the puppies to eat as much of the canned as they want & remove any leftovers after about an hour, as it will start to spoil and grow bacteria. You should offer weaning puppies canned food at least 3-4 times a day until they are regularly eating the kibble.

### **Be Patient and Cautious With Mom**

Just like we can be with our offspring, some moms can become protective over their new babies. Let mom come to you when you enter the room and make sure that she can see the pups when you have to handle them. **DO NOT** introduce household animals to a new mom in her 'sacred' space. This can create stress in mom, which can bring many complications, as well as potentially cause aggression. You are also putting those newborns at risk - they have NO immune system. **Keep them separate from other pets.**

**Never leave the house with mom separated from her babies!**

## Things to Look Out For

While mom should typically take care of all the pups' needs, there are some things you need to keep an eye out for. Check that mom is not smothering any of the babies and that they are getting enough to eat. **Weighing them twice a day is still mandatory while mom is caring for them.** Is mom ignoring a runt that seems weak or sickly? Is mom acting aggressively towards any of them? Is she doing anything that concerns you? Let the foster team know immediately so that they can arrange a medical exam or potentially place them with a foster that can bottle feed them if you cannot. We also have resources on the Active Foster page to help you with bottle feeding if you would like to learn.

## The Puppy Timeline

The following is an overview of what your puppy needs and the milestones he should be hitting as he grows. Refer to sections later in this guide for more in-depth information on feeding procedures, training, medical care, etc.

Remember: puppies' immune systems are very weak and we want to avoid having them at the shelter longer than necessary. **If you need to return your fosters, contact the foster team so we can arrange a hand-off with a new foster.** You can also fill out the foster relief form so we have a record of when you are going out of town.

Puppies should eat about 6-8 mLs per ounce of body weight. Ex: a 4 oz puppy should eat around 25 mLs of formula. This is a guide, not a rule. If a puppy is struggling with eating, maintaining attempts every hour is important rather than extending the time between feedings. Once on track, maintain the normal 2-3 hour feedings. Refer to the Feeding Section and Stomach Capacity chart for more information on formula per feeding and how many feedings per day based on a pup's weight.

Puppies are vaccinated every 2 weeks starting at 4 weeks of age. This schedule is based on them receiving their first vaccines at 4 weeks, but keep in mind that your schedule may be skewed depending on when your puppy was intaken. We can do vaccines a few days after they are due, but cannot do them early! Your medical history sheet will have due dates listed as well as Maddie's Pet Assistant reminders. You will schedule at [www.heschaff.org/activefoster](http://www.heschaff.org/activefoster). Please try to keep track of when they are due. Remember: puppies **cannot** go outside on grass until they have had their second DHPP shot (around 6 weeks). They can go on your deck or concrete areas though! Even after two vaccines, it is important to still keep them away from high traffic areas! They are not fully protected until they have had four DHPP.

### 0-1 weeks

- **Bottle Feeding:** Bottle feed 1/2 tablespoon formula every 2-3 hours. Before feeding, you will need to stimulate the puppy so it will urinate and defecate. You can do this by gently rubbing a warm, moistened cotton ball, baby wipe, or soft cloth on their genitals and anus. Puppies will learn to eliminate on their own around 3 to 4 weeks. See feeding section for more information.
- **Mom with Pups:** They should nurse vigorously and compete for nipples. Newborns can nurse up to 45 minutes at a time. Be sure to watch puppies nursing at least once a day, if the mom will permit it. Check that everyone is nursing and that there isn't too much fighting for position. A great deal of activity and crying could indicate a problem with milk flow, quality or availability. When the mom reenters the box, there should be some fussing for only a few minutes before everyone has settled down to serious nursing. If a runt is being pushed out, try to give them one-on-one time with mom and help them.
- **Environment:** The temperature of the nest box should be nice and warm: 85-90 degrees. Chilling is the number one danger to newborn puppies.

- **Development:** Newborns are deaf and blind and are unable to maintain their body temperature. **Keep puppies warm.** Umbilical cord will continue to dry and fall off on its own. At one week of age, the puppies should be handled minimally. Puppies will sleep 90% of the time and eat the other 10%. Make sure you are weighing them regularly, typically before and after feedings, to ensure they are gaining weight and getting enough food. It is natural for puppies to suckle on each other or on your fingers, even after they've finished eating. This is harmless unless you're noticing that it is causing irritation to another puppy's skin or is directed towards other puppies' genitals. Contact your foster team right away to see if the puppy needs to be separated. Suckling on the genitals can cause scar tissue and complications that could require surgery to repair.
- **Medical:** Puppies are not old enough for regular vaccinations or treatments at this age.



### 1-2 weeks

- **Feeding:** Bottle feed every 2-3 hours until they are full but not bloated. Continue stimulating them before feeding. If mom is there, she will still handle most of this unless you have been directed by the foster coordinator to help bottle feed.

- **Environment:** Floor temperature of the nest box should be 80 to 85 degrees.

- **Development:** Puppies should have doubled their birth weight. Ear canals open between 5-8 days. Eyes open between 8-14 days. They open gradually, usually starting to open from the nose outward. All puppies are born with blue eyes, and initially no pupils can be

distinguished from the irises - the eyes will appear solid dark blue. Healthy puppies will be round and warm and have pink skin. If you pinch them gently, their skin should spring back. When you pick a puppy up, it should wiggle energetically and when you put it down near the mom (if present), it should crawl back to her. Healthy puppies seldom cry. They are still unable to maintain their body temperature. Keep puppies warm. Continue weighing them before feedings to ensure they are gaining weight. If the puppy's weight is dropping or staying stagnant, let the foster coordinator know.

- **Medical:** Puppies are old enough for medical intervention as determined necessary by our medical staff. They can get their first round of dewormers at 2 weeks: Toltrazuril and Strongid. Schedule a pick up appointment for dewormer the next week if you don't already have it.

### 2-3 weeks

- **Feeding:** Bottle feed every 3-4 hours, until the puppies' bellies are full but not bloated. Continue stimulating them before feeding, they should start eliminating on their own around 3 weeks. If mom is there, she will still handle most of this unless you have been directed by the foster coordinator to help bottle feed.
- **Environment:** The floor temperature of the nest box should be 75 to 80 degrees.
- **Development:** Puppies will begin to crawl and stand between 18-21 days old, they will also begin sitting up and touching objects with their paws intentionally. Their weight will depend on their breed. They will begin to play with each other at this age too! Their milk teeth should begin erupting. They are still unable to maintain their body temperature, keep warm. If mom is with you, she will begin to spend larger periods out of the nest but likely will not go too far. Continue weighing them before feedings to ensure they are gaining weight. If the puppy's weight is dropping or staying stagnant, let the foster coordinator know.

- **Socialization:** Increase handling of puppies to get them used to human contact. Ensure that all interactions are gentle and positive; children may seem intimidating and should be supervised closely while visiting to ensure gentle handling.
- **Medical:** Puppies are old enough for medical intervention as determined necessary by our medical staff. They can get their first round of dewormers at 2 weeks of age: Toltrazuril and Strongid.

### 3-4 weeks

- **Feeding:** Bottle feed every 3-4 hours until puppies are full but not bloated (if mom is not feeding). Overnight feedings can be every 4 hours. If the puppies are not super interested in nursing, they may start lapping gruel (a mixture of formula and warmed wet food) from a shallow saucer, but weaning should be done gradually. See feeding section for more info on weaning. Puppies should be eliminating without stimulation at this age.
- **Development:** Puppies will start becoming aware of their surroundings and begin to see well at this age. Their adult eye color will begin to appear, but may not reach the final shade for many more weeks. They may start cleaning themselves but will still need help for serious cleaning. If mom is with you, she will handle serious cleaning. They are still unable to maintain their body temperature. Continue weighing them before feedings to ensure they are gaining weight. If the puppy's weight is dropping or staying stagnant, let the foster coordinator know.
- **Medical:** Puppies are old enough for medical intervention as determined necessary by our medical staff. They can get their first vaccines (DHPP and Bordetella) at 4 weeks of age

### 4-5 weeks

- **Feeding:** If they are not interested in weaning, continue to bottle feed as needed to keep pups from crying with hunger, about every four hours. Weaning of puppies may begin gradually. Remember it is better to feed more often than not enough! (only if mom is not feeding!)
  - Puppies can generally drink and eat from a saucer by 4 weeks of age. You can introduce them to solid food by offering warmed canned food, mixed with a little formula or water into gruel, in a shallow saucer. You can begin by placing one puppy by the plate of canned food gruel, and hoping for the best - if she starts eating, great! Her littermates will probably copy her and do the same. But without mom around to show them, many puppies do not have a clue about feeding from a saucer. The puppies will walk in it, slide in it, and track it all. Some puppies may prefer to lick the gruel from your fingers, if this is the case; slowly lower your finger to the plate and hold it to the food. This way the puppies will learn to eat with their heads bent down. Be patient, sometimes it takes two or three meals before they catch on.
  - If they do not seem interested enough to even sniff your finger, try gently opening the puppies' mouth and rub a little bit of the food on their teeth. Hopefully this will result in the puppy starting to lick your finger. If they're still not getting the idea, you can take a syringe (without a needle) and squirt a small amount of gruel directly into their mouths. If there is a mom present, she will usually begin weaning by discouraging her puppies from nursing; however, some dogs (particularly those with small litters) will allow nursing until the puppies are old enough for permanent homes. Some nursing activity is the canine equivalent of thumb-sucking, that is, for comfort only. Even if puppies appear to be nursing, they may not be getting all the nutrition they need from mom. Make sure they are eating food and gaining weight. Be sure that the puppies always have access to fresh water in a low, stable bowl around 5 weeks.
  - *For more info on weaning, see the feeding section later in this guide.*
- **Development:** Puppies weights will be dependent on their breed, you should keep weighing before feedings to ensure they are gaining weight. If the puppy's weight is dropping, let the foster coordinator



know. It is normal for them to drop a bit of weight while weaning, don't panic! They will be active little puppies at this time.

- **Housebreaking:** Begin housebreaking at four weeks of age. This can be done by using a pile of newspapers or training pads in a corner. After each feeding, place the puppy on the papers. Be patient! They may not remember to do this every time, or may forget where to find the papers, but they will learn quickly. Be sure to give the puppies lots of praise when they first start using their papers or cry to go out. It is a good idea to confine the puppies to a relatively small space, because the larger the area the puppies have to play in, the more likely they will forget where the papers are. Keep the papers clean and away from their food.
- **Medical:** Puppies are old enough to begin their regular vaccinations and treatments at 4 weeks. Their exam will consist of two vaccinations and another round of dewormer. You'll make this appointment once they reach 4 weeks old using the following link [www.heschatt.org/activefoster](http://www.heschatt.org/activefoster) Puppies are able to travel to the shelter without mom at this age. They will not get a rabies vaccine until 3 months old.

### 5-6 weeks

- **Feeding:** Weaning should be easier now. Feed gruel 4 times a day. Introduce dry food and water as well. You may also experiment with PLAIN meat (no spices added) baby food to help with the transition.
  - For reluctant eaters, try mixing some puppy milk replacer or goat milk into the gruel or tempt the puppy with some meat-flavored human baby food mixed with a bit of water. The familiar formula taste and smell or the meat flavor of baby food is often more appealing to the picky eaters than dog food. Once the puppy accepts the formula based gruel or baby food gradually mix in dry puppy food until the puppy has been weaned like the other puppies.
- **Development:** Puppies can start to wander around the room under supervision. The strongest, most curious puppy will figure out how to get out of the nest. The others will quickly follow. Play with your puppies often! You can start weighing them once a day to ensure they are gaining weight. If the puppy's weight is dropping, let the foster coordinator know.
- **Medical:** Puppies are typically not due for regular vaccinations or treatments this week, but always check your medical records to be sure since the intake date will determine the timeline.

### 6-7 weeks



- **Feeding:** Feed canned food at least 3 times daily and have dry food available at all times. If any puppies are territorial with food, provide a second bowl so that everyone gets fed. Although the puppies may not eat much at a single sitting, they usually like to eat at frequent intervals throughout the day.

- **Development:** Puppies will start to act like actual dogs; playing and grooming themselves. Once they get their second DHPP shot, they can go outside but make sure they are not left unattended outside. Be sure to show them the puppy pad or take them outside after meals, play sessions, and naps so you can continue housebreaking. Chewing on inappropriate items should be corrected by giving the puppy an appropriate object to play with and chew up. Continue weighing them once a day.

- **Medical:** Depending on when your pups got their first vaccines, they are most likely due for their boosters this week. You can check their medical forms to be sure. If they have reached 1.5 lbs they can receive flea prevention. You can schedule a routine vaccine appointment at [heschatt.org/activefoster](http://heschatt.org/activefoster)

- **Mom:** If mom is with you, she most likely can come back to the shelter as her job is done once the pups are weaned. The sooner her babies are no longer nursing, the sooner she can be spayed; she must not be allowed to nurse the pups for at least 2 weeks before surgery. Her milk must dry up a bit before her spay. You can separate mama from her babies when you see that they are eating enough gruel/kibble to maintain (and gain!) their weights (generally around 6 weeks). Mom can still have contact with the babies, but it is important not to allow them to nurse. We can find another foster to step in and help with mom or puppies at this time. The Foster Coordinator will call to schedule a time for her to come in for spay surgery. Mom should have no food past 9pm the night before surgery and no breakfast the day of. Pending no complications, she will be up for adoption the day after surgery.
  - Remember that you, as her foster, are responsible for helping prepare mom for adoption just as much as her pups. We will need a bio for mom and some photos: face, full body, and personality photos. You can fill out the pet personality form at [www.heschatt.org/activefoster](http://www.heschatt.org/activefoster). The more info we get, the better chances of her finding her perfect forever home!

### 7-8 weeks

- **Feeding:** Feed canned food at least 2 times daily and leave dry food out at all times. If any puppies are territorial with food, provide a second bowl so that everyone is being fed.
- **Development:** Puppies are maturing and growing more. They will be active and exploring like toddlers do. Remember to weigh your puppies once a day and tell the foster coordinator if they are dropping weight.



- **Medical:** Puppies are likely not due for regular vaccinations or treatments this week if they got their first vaccine at 4 weeks, but always check your medical forms to be sure.
- **Future:** Your time as a foster parent for these pups is drawing to a close. They are eligible for transport or adoption at eight weeks, so you will likely be hearing from HES staff very soon about the next steps in these pups' journey. Get some extra snuggles in with your fosters and take plenty of pictures. You know the pups better than anyone else, so please fill out their personality profile on the Active Fosters page. Adopters will want to know their personalities: are they lazy or rambunctious? How is housebreaking coming? Do they know any tricks? Some fosters have even written letters to be sent with puppies' adopters.
  - This is also the time to let us know if you are interested in adopting (also called foster fail) if you haven't already. **Remember: saying goodbye is the goal**, but we all know how every so often, you'll develop a special connection with one of your fosters. Please just communicate with us.

### 8-9 Weeks

- **Feeding:** Feed canned food at least 2 times daily. If any puppies are territorial with food, provide a second bowl so that everyone is being fed. Begin leaving dry food out at all times. Remember to be weighing your puppies! If they are dropping weight, let the foster coordinator know.
- **Development:** Puppies are growing and will soon be teenagers. They are likely a handful, continue working on any basic puppy obedience and housebreaking.
- **Medical:** Puppies are likely due for vaccine boosters this week. This can be done while they're at HES for either surgery or a transport health check.

You may end up fostering puppies who are older than 8 weeks due to space issues at the shelter or waiting on transport. Their timelines may be a little different but vaccines are still every two weeks.

## Feeding Info for Puppies

Keep a feeding chart for your puppies where you can log their initial weights, how much formula they ate, and any odd behaviors you observe (i.e. acting ravenous, choking, not interested in eating). It sometimes takes puppies a few rounds of nursing to get the hang of it. Be patient with them.

Bottle babies should be fed about every 2-3 hours depending on how old they are. Studies show their suckling reflexes are strongest when they first wake up. If your puppy is acting ravenous, decrease the time between feedings until the behavior stops. This can prevent them from suckling too hard and choking. If your puppy is not interested in eating, give them a short break (no more than an hour) and continue trying until they start eating. Log these behaviors on your feeding chart. Water drives all metabolic functions in dogs (and people) and their bodies cannot function properly if they are dehydrated. Nursing puppies and gruelies get all their water from their food and are therefore very susceptible to dehydration. Diarrhea, vomiting and not eating enough are the key indicators of dehydration and should be reported to the foster team immediately. Dehydration can be life threatening

If your puppy is on medication, give it after they have eaten, unless told otherwise, to prevent upsetting the stomach. Some medications can be mixed with formula - ask your foster team if this is okay. **Never try to feed a puppy who is unresponsive, lethargic, or unable to swallow!**

### Stomach Capacity and Bottle Feeding Guide

Puppy Weight (lbs, oz)	Puppy Weight (grams)	Daily Caloric Requirement	Amount of Formula per Day (ml)	Amount per Feeding (ml)	Approximate Number of Feedings per Day
2oz	57g	11 kcal	13ml	2ml	6
4oz	113g	23 kcal	25ml	5ml	6
6oz	170g	34 kcal	38ml	7ml	6
8oz	227g	45 kcal	50ml	9ml	6
10oz	284g	57 kcal	63ml	11ml	6
12oz	340g	68 kcal	76ml	14ml	6
14oz	397g	79 kcal	88ml	16ml	6
16oz (1lb)	454g	91 kcal	101ml	18ml	6
2lb	907g	181 kcal	202ml	36ml	6
3lb	1361g	272 kcal	303ml	54ml	6
4lb	1814g	363 kcal	403ml	73ml	6
5lb	2268g	454 kcal	504ml	91ml	6

6lb	2722g	544 kcal	605ml	109ml	6
7lb	3175g	635 kcal	706ml	127ml	6
8lb	3629g	726 kcal	806ml	145ml	6

Chart adapted from *Puppy Bottle Feeding and Stomach Capacity Chart* by Maddie's Fund

## Bottle feeding:

### Step One: Preparing Your Formula & Bottle

Never give a neonate anything other than their specified formula and **never give them cow's milk**. Puppies' digestive systems are fragile and they should only be on the recommended formula/food, unless told otherwise by HES veterinarian or foster team. If you start them on a specific brand of formula, it is best to stick with that type. Switching formulas can cause discomfort, gas, diarrhea, and intestinal issues. To help their tummies with food transitions, you can give them probiotics which are provided by HES. Sometimes puppies are picky so they may like a different kind of formula or goat milk.

When preparing your formula, be sure to follow the mixing instructions, although if you need to transition puppies from moms milk to formula, the chart below can be helpful in preventing diarrhea, constipation and an upset gut.

Always make sure that your formula is completely mixed and there are no clumps. We recommend using a blender bottle if possible. Only use clean, sterilized nipples, bottles and blender bottles when feeding. After mixing your formula and filling the bottle or syringe, place hot water in a cup and let the bottle/syringe with formula rest inside to bring the milk to the temperature of your skin. A bottle warmer works great as well. Gently swirl the formula to mix it well after heating. Discard any unused formula from each feeding. **DO NOT KEEP LEFTOVER FORMULA TO REHEAT!**

To save time, you can pre-mix formula and just not heat it. Mixed formula can be kept in the refrigerator for **up to three days**, after that it must be disposed of. Unmixed powdered formula can be stored in the refrigerator for four months and six months in the freezer once opened. Some brands like Breeder's Edge are self stable when in powder form. Other brands need to be refrigerated once open even if not mixed with water. Pay close attention to directions.



Should you have to transition puppies from moms milk to formula, use the following mixing guide to prevent diarrhea:

- First four feedings 8 parts water to 1 parts formula
- Second four feedings 4 parts water to 1 parts formula
- All subsequent feedings should be as the formula directions instruct or 2 parts water to 1 parts formula

### Step Two: Stimulate Your Puppy

Helping your puppy to eliminate before feeding will ensure that they can eat the entire amount that they need to as it will prevent the puppy from feeling full too early. They are too young to eliminate regularly on their own. To stimulate, take a warm washcloth, cotton ball, tissue or baby wipe and gently rub at the genitals and rectum until the puppy stops peeing and pooping. They should urinate at every feeding. When stimulating, use a white colored cloth etc so you can make note of any abnormal urine coloring. Neonates may start out pooping once a day but the frequency should continue to increase regularly. Normal neonate stool colors will be brown with a

slight yellow cast. Stool should come out easily, it should be soft but retain its shape. Diarrhea and constipation are both dangerous in neonates.

\*If you think your puppy is constipated, you can massage their abdomen in a warm bath or try taking their temperature rectally to help loosen things up. If your puppy has diarrhea you can slightly decrease the amount of water in the formula to help the puppy firm up. If these tips do not help, let your foster team know and they will talk you through the next steps.

### Step 3: Weigh Your Puppy

Always weigh your puppy before bottle feeding them until they have completely transitioned to wet food (around 4 weeks). An easy way to calculate how much the pup ate, instead of trying to decipher those tiny lines on the syringe or bottle, is to weigh them after they eat and subtract the two numbers. Final weight - initial weight = amount eaten. It's easiest to weigh your puppy by placing a bowl on your scale, hitting the tare button so that your scale forgets the weight of the bowl and then placing your puppy inside the bowl so that they can't squirm or crawl off the scale while you're waiting for their weight to register.

Record your initial weight at each feeding, these weights are to be sent to the foster team via email ([foster@heschatt.org](mailto:foster@heschatt.org)) every Friday. This is **mandatory** so that we do not miss any decline in health. Nursing puppies still with mom should be weighed twice a day rather than every time they nurse. Puppies 5+ weeks of age that are eating fine on their own should be weighed daily. Remember that a stagnant weight or weight loss\* is one of the first signs of illness in puppies.

*\*It is not uncommon for puppies to drop a little bit of weight when they begin transitioning to food and are becoming more mobile/learning to play.*

### Step 4: Feeding Your Puppy



Feed puppies one at a time. Place them on a counter top/lap and allow them to feed with four paws down with a level head up. This simulates how they would nurse from mom. Some neonates may knead and try to grab your hand or bottle. This is normal, allow them to nurse as they are comfortable. NEVER feed a neonate on their back. This can cause the formula to go down the wrong tube and lead to aspiration.

Puppies 0-1 weeks should feed from a syringe and then transition to a bottle as milk from a bottle comes out a bit quicker. Some foster parents prefer to continue with using oral syringes, which is fine, we usually have several different sizes we can send with you so that they can grow with your pup. Change syringes often, as they will begin to stick and can cause frustration or the syringe can suddenly give, causing too much milk to enter the puppy's mouth.

You can gently open the puppy's mouth with your finger and place the nipple into its mouth directly on its tongue if necessary. Pull lightly on the bottle/syringe to promote strong sucking. It's important to tilt the bottle to prevent them from swallowing air. You should never squeeze the bottle, a latched puppy will suckle at a rate that they can handle. Squeezing can cause aspiration which can lead to further complications. A latched puppy's ears will wiggle, their tongue will form a u-shape and you'll hear tell-tale suckling from them. Be cautious about your puppy overeating - they should look like little pears but not appear bloated. Puppies should eat roughly 5mLs per 100 grams of body weight each feeding.

### **Latching Troubleshooting:**

- Check the temperature of the formula: it should be body temperature or warmer. If it has cooled, put it in a cup of warm water for a few moments.
- Check the puppy's body temperature: pups may not eat if they are too hot or too cold.
- Are they fussy and flailing? Ideally, they should be fed in their warm, comfy beds but they might do better when slightly swaddled in a blanket or towel.
- If they aren't interested, try rubbing their faces with a washcloth or toothbrush to mimic their mom's tongue and get them interested in nursing.
- Consider holding two together: puppies are instinctively competitive for food. If you have one that isn't latching, hold it with a sibling to encourage their survival instincts.
- Are they latching but are struggling to get anything? You can poke a slightly larger hole in the nipple. The formula should drip slowly when the bottle is held upside down.

Be sure to log how much your pup ate after each meal. After feeding, stroke the pup's back to help them burp. Using a toothbrush here works great and simulates a mom's tongue! Clean any leftover milk off their faces to prevent any skin irritation or fur loss.

If milk comes out of a puppy's nose, it is aspirating. Pups are pretty good at clearing milk from their lungs on their own most of the time. Set the puppy down and allow it to begin breathing normally, which should take a few seconds. Notate this on their feeding chart when it happens.

ALWAYS SANITIZE THE AREA AND YOUR FEEDING TOOLS BEFORE AND AFTER FEEDING.

### **Weaning Bottle Babies to Gruelies**

Puppies will begin weaning at about 4-5 weeks when the majority of their teeth begin erupting. You may notice that your puppy is ready to wean because they are biting at the nipple on their bottle and seem hungrier than ever. This is a sensitive stage because you may see your pup nibbling on wet or dry food - this does not mean they are eating enough. They should eat 5% of their body weight at each feeding.

Gruel is made with either formula or water and canned puppy food. Formula can help ease the weaning process as puppies are used to the taste and smell of it by now. If you are using formula in your gruel, don't leave the gruel out for too long as the formula will spoil. You will mix either liquid and the canned food until it reaches an applesauce-like consistency. This consistency is important because it ensures the babies are staying hydrated during the weaning process. A good starting ratio is 2 cans of food to 1 can of water or formula for multiples or 1 can of food to 1/2 a can of water for a single pup. You can mix it in a blender to get the right consistency throughout and always store gruel in a fridge to prevent bacteria growth. You can reduce the water content gradually until puppies are on pure canned food.

### **Teaching Puppies About Gruel**

Weaned pups need to be fed every 4-5 hours to ensure their blood sugar stays up. They can go 6-8 hours overnight but not throughout the day. Continue to weigh weaning puppies before each feeding to ensure that they are eating enough.

Give pups a shallow dish with warmed gruel at each feeding and let them discover it. Some may take to it right away - some may not. Be patient with them. Depending on the number of puppies you have, multiple food bowls may be necessary to prevent food guarding/bullying. A good rule of thumb is one more bowl than the number of puppies, if your space allows. During this stage you will also begin leaving out dry food so that they

can independently make the transition when they are ready. If they do not begin eating the gruel on their own see the section about syringe feeding gruel.

This stage is one of the messiest - be sure to wipe gruel from the puppies coat to prevent irritated skin and loss of hair!

### **Syringe Feeding Gruelies**

Gruel made for syringe feeding should have a consistency that better resembles a milkshake and may require less water than gruel being eaten from a dish. This is also where you may try making gruel with meat baby food so that it will flow through the syringe easier. Make sure that gruel is warmed when feeding but not hot.

- Like you would when bottle feeding, make sure the puppy is belly down and you have a loose grip around their head and shoulders. Insert the syringe into the mouth at a 45 degree angle from the side. Feeding from the front can cause choking.
- Slowly plunge the syringe to feed gruel into the puppy's mouth, removing the syringe every few seconds to allow them to swallow. Leading them towards the bowl of gruel will help them learn bowl etiquette and eating on their own as well.
- Weigh pups throughout the feeding, they should eat 5% of their body weight!

*For puppies weaning from mom, give them access to wet food several times a day in a shallow dish for them to explore. They will naturally wean themselves when they and mom are ready.*

## **Common Medical Issues**

Neonates do not have fully developed immune systems and are susceptible to many illnesses and parasites, some of which they get from their mother at birth. Puppies need proper care and attention to ensure they grow up happy and healthy.

### **Upper Respiratory Infection (URI)/Kennel Cough**

The term "upper respiratory infection" describes any illness that affects an animal's respiratory system; think of a puppy cold. URIs are very common in shelter environments. Symptoms include coughing(hacking), sneezing, ocular/nasal discharge, fever, and loss of appetite. URIs are treated with antibiotics. It is very important to keep puppies hydrated and warm while they recover from an upper respiratory infection. URIs are also very contagious (airborne) and you should be extra careful to sanitize between handling your sick animals and any healthy ones as well as the supplies they use, especially food/water dishes.

### **Parvovirus**

Canine parvovirus is a highly contagious virus that can affect all dogs, but unvaccinated dogs and puppies younger than four months old are the most at risk. The virus affects dogs' gastrointestinal tracts and is spread by direct dog-to-dog contact and contact with contaminated feces (stool), environments, or people. It is resistant to all temperatures and can survive in its environment for long periods of time. It is extremely important to thoroughly and deeply sanitize anything used or touched by an infected dog. Gloves/gown should be worn at all times when handling an infected animal and discarded properly and immediately. Some of the signs of parvovirus include lethargy, loss of appetite, abdominal pain and bloating, fever or low body temperature (hypothermia), vomiting, and severe (oftentimes)bloody diarrhea. Persistent vomiting and diarrhea can cause rapid dehydration, and damage to the intestines and immune system can cause septic shock. You can read more about Parvo on the Active Foster site.

## Distemper

Canine distemper is a contagious and serious disease caused by a virus that attacks the respiratory, gastrointestinal and nervous systems of puppies and dogs. Symptoms include watery to pus-like discharge from eyes, fever, nasal discharge, coughing, lethargy, reduced appetite, and vomiting. As the virus attacks the nervous system, infected dogs develop circling behavior, head tilt, muscle twitches, convulsions with jaw chewing movements and salivation, seizures, and partial or complete paralysis. The virus may also cause the footpads to thicken and harden. Distemper is often fatal, and dogs that survive usually have permanent, irreparable nervous system damage.

## Canine Parainfluenza

Canine parainfluenza virus (CPIV) is a highly contagious respiratory virus. The symptoms of Parainfluenza are coughing (wet or dry cough), fever, bloody or mucous nasal discharge, and lethargy. While there is only one type of parainfluenza virus infection in dogs, the virus itself can be a component of other canine infectious respiratory diseases (kennel cough for example).

## Demodex Mange

Demodex mange is caused by a parasitic mite that lives in the hair follicles of dogs. All normal dogs have a few of these mites on their skin. We see this in puppies a lot because a poor or immature immune system allows the number of mites to rapidly increase. It's also seen often in dogs that are neglected because their immune system weakens. The main symptoms of demodex mange are hair loss and dry skin. Treatment can vary depending on the age and size of the dog but can include oral medications, topical medications and medicated baths. It is not contagious to people or other animals.



## Sarcoptic Mange

Sarcoptic mange is caused by a parasitic mite that burrows into the surface of the skin. The main symptoms of sarcoptic mange are hair loss and dry skin. The mites will cause the puppy or dog to constantly scratch and chew itself until they have hair loss. Usually it will affect the legs and belly and skin will become thickened and darkened. Treatment can vary depending on the age and size of the dog but can include oral medications, topical medications and medicated baths. **It IS contagious to people and other animals.** It gives people what we call scabies. The photo to the left is an example of an extreme case of sarcoptic mange in a Great Pyrenees puppy.

## Worms

Puppies often have intestinal parasites like coccidia, hookworms, roundworms and tapeworms. It is important that we get these parasites treated as soon as possible. Symptoms can include diarrhea, vomiting and nausea. While coccidia, hookworms and roundworms can't be seen in the stool, tapeworms can be seen. Tapeworms break apart and normally come out of the body in segments that resemble little moving grains of rice. If you see roundworms, it is because the dewormer has killed them and they are shedding them. They are long and shaped like spaghetti noodles.



3-6 inches



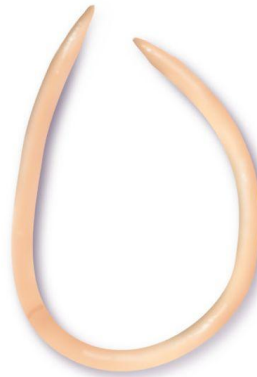
Roundworm

2-3 inches



Whipworm

~1/8 inch



Hookworm

~8 inches



Tapeworm



### Ringworm

Ringworm is a fungus that initially presents itself as round scaly patches of skin. You will most often find it starting out on the feet, tails, ears or face. **It is often contagious to people and other animals through touch.** If untreated the fungus will cause body wide hair loss and skin irritation. Treatment typically takes around 1 month and quarantine is mandatory.

(to the left is a photo of a puppy with ringworm on his ear)

### Giving Liquid Oral Medications

The foster team will typically have your oral medications dosed out in syringes for you so that you don't have to worry about drawing up the correct amounts. Hold the puppy in your non-dominant hand and hold the syringe in your dominant hand. Placing them on a table or counter may be easier than holding them in your lap. Having two people (one holding the pup and one plunging the syringe) will always make things go a little more smoothly as well.

Place the syringe into the side of the puppy's mouth and angle the syringe towards the throat - be careful not to gag or choke them. Depress the syringe slowly to feed the medication into the puppy's mouth. Try not to draw the process out but be sure to not go so quickly that you overwhelm, choke or have them spit out the medication, causing a missed dose.

Only give medication that has been approved by the HES medical team or foster team.

*\*When giving doxycycline, follow the medication with the same amount of water in a syringe. Doxycycline can irritate and burn the throat and esophagus and it's important to chase the medication with water to prevent damage.*

## FADING PUPPY SYNDROME

*Fading Puppy Syndrome is a life-threatening emergency in which a puppy, sometimes one that was once healthy, “crashes” and begins to fade away.*

### Symptoms

- Low Body Temperature – the puppy feels cool or cold to the touch
- Extreme Lethargy – not getting up, unable to stand, not responding to touching/petting
- Gasping for Breath – whimpering/crying out

### Cause

- Hypothermia – being too cold
- Hypoglycemia – blood sugar is too low

### **WHEN THIS HAPPENS, IT IS VITAL THAT YOU TAKE THESE STEPS IMMEDIATELY!**

#### Step 1:

- Get them warm:
- Create a “burrito” towel. Immediately wrap the puppy up in a towel like a burrito leaving only their face exposed (their whole body, tail, ears, and paws should be in the towel, only nose and mouth out). Do not take the puppy out of the towel to adjust them, check on them, etc. Every time you take them out, you will risk making them cold again, even if it is only for a second.
- Wrap a heating pad turned on low around the burrito towel, to avoid burns, as an extra source of heat. Secure it around the towel so it stays in place.

#### Step 2:

- Get their blood sugar up:
- Get a bowl or Tupperware container and put a few tablespoons of sugar in hot water.
- Stir so that the sugar dissolves – you want the mixture to be thick but still runny
- Karo syrup can also be used (plain clear kind)
- Use a syringe or your finger to give 3 drops of the mixture every 3 minutes into the mouth. If they are not swallowing, try not to get it down their throat. Aim for their gums or tongue.
- Set a timer to make sure that you are doing this at least every 3 minutes. Every 5 to 10 minutes is too long and they will continue to crash.

#### Step 3:

- Notify the foster team:
- Send a text to the on-call foster staff – There will not be extra advice for you, this is the most that can be done but we do need to be made aware of what is going on. We do not send neonates to veterinarian’s offices because these offices are kept cold and the staff does not have the ability to feed them as described above on short notice.
- If you have to leave while a puppy is crashing, please let us know so that we can make other arrangements.

It can take hours for puppies in this condition to improve. Once they have shown marked improvement they can return to their normal activities. You should continue to monitor them for any recurrences.

*Keep in mind that even with love, attention and treatment, some puppies still will not make it. Try not to blame yourself during this difficult time. Any foster puppy that you have cared for was given a second chance at life BECAUSE OF YOU. Their chances at survival are much higher with you, than they are left at the shelter. The Foster Team knows that you did everything you could for every puppy in your care.*

## My Foster Passed Away

As hard as we try to save every life, unfortunately there are some that just don't make it. Should you discover that your foster animal has passed away, please alert the foster department ASAP, calling the foster cell 423-290-2908. With permission, you are more than welcome to bury your foster animal if you would like, or you

can bring their body back to the shelter. In some cases, our medical team may request the body be returned to the shelter building so a necropsy can be performed to determine cause of death, so please always check with the foster department before burying your foster animal. If the foster had something contagious, we would also recommend the animal to be cremated.

Losing an animal is never an easy thing, especially when it's an animal you have been fighting so hard to save. Should you feel the need for help with your grieving process, please don't hesitate to reach out to the foster team or your foster peers. We will always be here to help you however we can.

Don't hesitate to ask for a break from fostering after a loss like this, it's only natural to want some space and heal. We'll give you all the time you need.

You can also find help at The Association for Pet Loss & Bereavement [www.aplb.org/support](http://www.aplb.org/support) and ways to honor your foster at <https://honoringourpets.com/pet-honoring-faqs/>



## Training Tips

### How to Handle Mouthing

If your foster expresses their excitement by putting things in their mouth, they need help learning what things are appropriate to do this to (like toys), and what is inappropriate to do this to (like hands and shoes). If your foster dog or puppy is mouthy when they get excited, try redirecting them by placing a toy in their mouth when they grab inappropriate objects, and praise lavishly or reward them with a moment of playtime when they automatically go for their toy. Mouthing

If you are fostering a singleton puppy, they will need to learn bite inhibition, which is the ability to control how much pressure to use with their mouths. Normally, they learn this when playing with their littermates. If a puppy bites too hard, the other puppy yelps loudly and play comes to a halt momentarily. You can mimic this by yelping like a puppy whenever your foster puppy mouths you. When they remove their mouth, give lots of praise and resume playing. If they do not respond, turn around and walk away from the puppy – completely ignoring them. After a minute or so, resume play.

Never hit them, flick their nose, simulate bites, or “alpha roll” them to “train” them to not use their mouths.

These are aversive training techniques that are not supported by HES. If you are having problems getting your foster to stop mouthing you, please contact the foster department ASAP for help - we're here to help you work through it!

You should always avoid playing with your foster animals with only your hands, as this will confuse them about what appropriate toys are. Always make sure you have a toy in your hand when going to play with your mouthy puppy, and make sure playtime focuses on the toy.

### **How to Handle Chewing**

**Redirect.** We want to teach our puppies what they ARE allowed to chew on, not just the don'ts. If you catch your dog chewing on something they shouldn't, interrupt them with a neutral (non-praise, but also non-punishment) noise that gets their attention. A mild "eh eh" or "no" or a light clap of your hands work well. Offer them an appropriate toy or chew instead as a means of redirecting the chewing behavior. While your dog is in the process of learning these dos and don'ts, offer lots of praise any time your dog picks up something they are allowed to chew.

**Exercise.** There is an adage that "a tired dog is a good dog". Sometimes a dog chews for no other reason than they are bored (as one might chew on the cap of a pen in a dull meeting). It's important to make sure your dog has not only plenty of physical stimulation, but mental stimulation as well. Mental stimulation can include training games (learning sit, down, shake, etc.), puzzle toys, or even a Kong stuffed with tasty treats (peanut butter, pumpkin puree, and plain yogurt are a few ideas). When you've had enough play time with your puppy but he/she still has tons of energy, give them a puzzle toy that takes them 15 minutes to complete to help tire them out and give you some peace. Always monitor what you give your puppy to assure they aren't able to chew off and swallow pieces that may be a choking hazard or cause an obstruction.

Remember - never give your foster dog any rawhide/Bully Stick/real bone toys/treats, as they can be very dangerous when ingested.

### **House training**

Almost everyone's first question regarding adopting a puppy is "are they house trained?" Having a foster parent work on house training really helps them get adopted! Try to offer potty breaks at the same time of day every day to help your foster get into a routine. After waking up, after meal times, after play time, and before bed are all good rules of thumb. If you catch your dog pottying in the house, never scold them or rub their nose in their mess; instead interrupt them (if possible) and take them outside (or to a puppy pad if appropriate) to their potty area. Give extravagant praise when they finish eliminating outside.

Puppies can generally hold their bladder for one hour per month of age (i.e.: 1 month = 1 hour, 2 months = 2 hours, etc). Similar to adult dogs, placing them on puppy pads after waking, after meals, after play sessions, and every 30-60 minutes when awake will help them quickly learn where their potty spot is. Remember to never punish a puppy having an accident; instead follow the guidelines for adult dogs - interrupt them and place them on a puppy pad in a dedicated " potty area " of their enclosure and give lots and lots of praise when they successfully go on the pad. Once puppies are allowed to go outside, you can start taking them out for potty breaks rather than solely using the puppy pads. For more details on proper housetraining, please visit our Foster Resources webpage

### **Enrichment**

Making sure your foster dog or puppy is enriched is a very easy (and fun!) thing to do, and helps to make sure their brains stay active and gives them a break from the mundane day-to-day. Enrichment should be an ongoing thing that includes novel objects as well as taking ordinary things and making them more fun and challenging. For pups, enrichment can be anything from searching for treats hidden throughout their area, to being fed from puzzle feeders, to taking slow "sniffy" walks allowing your foster dog to smell anything and

everything they want once they're old enough! These simple things, along with daily, interactive play sessions, will help keep your foster pet entertained and will keep them using their beautiful brain to solve puzzles and get a break from the mundane.



"Pipe feeders" are a type of slow feeder/enrichment, they are made with a PVC pipe capped at both ends, with holes drilled throughout large enough for kibble to come out when they are shaken/rolled around. You can use these in place of bowls for meals, or with some treats! Paper towel tubes can be capped with peanut butter or wet food, and then filled with dry food, then capped on the other end. To make this treat a little more difficult you can freeze it! You can also moisten the dry food so that it freezes as well. You can also put food in paper bags! It's ok if your foster dog eats a paper bag or paper towel tube, just not *\*too\** many of them! These are great for dogs that destroy and

try to ingest toys. "Pupsicles" are another way to use food as enrichment. Fill a plastic cup with a meal, then add water and freeze for a delicious treat. Slow feeders can sometimes be provided by HES, or you can DIY one by using a muffin tin (right side up or upside down) or even a 'no tip' style of bowl turned upside down. You can make a "snuffle mat" for the dog by using a shag-style carpet, or googling how to make them. Scatter food through the fabric so your foster can root around the carpet to eat the pieces!

You can hide treats inside tissue boxes (with the plastic removed). Once your foster has figured out how to get to those treats easily, you can put pieces of a brown paper bag in the box as well. This makes it a little harder! Scent-work can be fun too! You can start by teaching your foster dog "find it". Using high-value treats like pieces of hot dog, cooked meat like chicken (with no spices/oils) can help make this a more fun and rewarding game for your foster (just not too many)! Start with a treat in one hand and rewarding your foster dog for smelling, then pawing at that hand. Once they learn that, begin hiding treats around the house or in a box! "Sniff-centered" walks are a great way for your foster dog to use their brain, take a more leisurely walk with the intention of allowing your foster dog to smell everything they would like (that is safe, of course). High traffic areas like parking lots and public parks can be great for this if your foster is comfortable in those situations and they're old enough! Play the "name game"- reward with a treat for your foster animal responding to their name. Teach simple tricks! Dogs sitting, laying down, shake and stay all help make them more personable to potential adopters. Some other fun tricks to teach can be spin and roll over! Don't forget to start small, and with short training sessions while keeping it positive! If you need any help, instructions, or more ideas, just let the foster team know.

## Thank you for fostering!

Have more questions? Visit [www.heschatt.org/activefoster](http://www.heschatt.org/activefoster) for more resources!

